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In reply refer to:
I-7543/68

Honorable Richard Helms
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C. 20505

OSD Declassification/Release Instructions on File

Dear Dick:

An examination of the relative force capabilities of NATO and the Warsaw Pact was agreed to be undertaken by the NATO Defense Ministers in Brussels on May 10. I should like to solicit your contributions to and comments on the attached approach.

At Enclosure A is a proposed scenario for such an examination.

At Enclosure B is a proposed Outline of Study.

The outline should include at this point all important measures of military capability. Including these factors in the outline should not imply any conclusion as to their relative weights or importance in given situations. Additional measures or suggested modifications to those indicators now contained in the outline would be welcome.

The detailed assessment itself should not, of course, attempt to determine who would "win" in any particular NATO-Warsaw Pact confrontation or war. Instead it should present an objective statement of strengths and weaknesses on both sides, the outstanding characteristics of the two sides, and the issues upon which judgments should turn in assessing the probable performance of the two sides should be stated. If there are differences of view regarding matters of fact, I would propose that, wherever possible, these should be presented as a range of possibilities rather than being allowed to interrupt progress in the examination. When differences of factual interpretation rest on crucial assumptions that are uncertain, these should be stated and discussed frankly.

Ambassador Cleveland has reviewed the scenario and the outline; he agrees in general, and will furnish additional comments after his return to Brussels.

I would appreciate having the concurrence or comment of the Central Intelligence Agency by June 27. I have also asked the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Mr. Leddy for their concurrence or comments.

Sincerely,